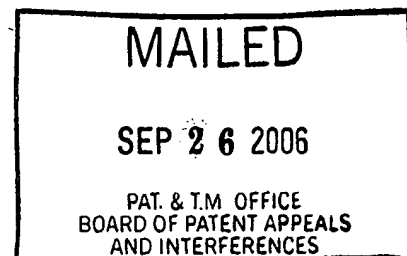


UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

BEFORE THE BOARD OF PATENT APPEALS
AND INTERFERENCE

Ex parte WILLIAM A. BANKS, MORGAN L. PAPE
and LUIS CASTILLO

Application 10/007,105



ORDER RETURNING UNDOCKETED APPEAL TO EXAMINER

This application was electronically received at the Board of Patent Appeals and Interferences (BPAI) on September 5, 2006. A review of the application has revealed that the application is not ready for docketing as an appeal. Accordingly, the application is herewith being returned to the examiner. The matter requiring attention prior to docketing is identified below.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF REPLY BRIEF

On July 20, 2006, the examiner mailed a communication acknowledging receipt of Appellants' Reply Brief, dated July 13, 2006. A review of the Response to Reply Brief reveals that the response was a supplemental Examiner's Answer. It is noted, that the examiner did not obtain the necessary approval to send out a supplemental Examiner's Answer. The requirements for a supplemental Examiner's Answer are set forth in with MPEP 1207.05, which states:

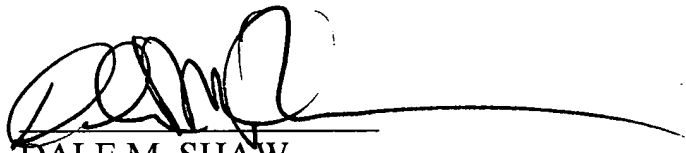
- (1) After receipt of a reply brief in compliance with § 41.41, the primary examiner must acknowledge receipt and entry of the reply brief. In addition, the primary examiner may withdraw the final rejection and reopen prosecution or may furnish a supplemental examiner's answer responding to any new issue raised in the reply brief.
- (2) A supplemental examiner's answer responding to a reply brief may not include a new ground of rejection.
- (b) If a supplemental examiner's answer is furnished by the examiner, appellant may file another reply brief under § 41.41 to any supplemental examiner's answer within two months from the date of the supplemental examiner's answer.

A review of the Response to Reply Brief reveals that the examiner did not provide proper approval.

Accordingly, it is ORDERED that the application is return to the Examiner:

- 1) vacate the examiner Acknowledgment to the Reply Brief mailed July 13, 2006;
- 2) proper acknowledgment of the Reply Brief is required and/or appropriate consideration of the Reply Brief dated July 13, 2006;
- 3) acquiring approval for any Supplemental Examiner's Answer in response to the Reply Brief mailed July 13, 2006, if appropriate; and
- 4) for such further action as may be deemed appropriate.

BOARD OF PATENT APPEALS
AND INTERFERENCES

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. Shaw', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

DALE M. SHAW
Deputy Chief Appeals Administrator
(571)272-9797

DMS/pgc

cc: Elsa Keller
Intellectual Property Department
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